



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

PART 224 FW 3-6	SUBJECT Personnel Service Awards and Recognition Program Monetary Awards Nonmonetary Awards & Informal Honors Honor Awards	RELEASE NUMBER 384
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT Division of Human Resources		DATE December 27, 2001

EXPLANATION OF MATERIAL TRANSMITTED:

These chapters are revised to mandate the use of FWS Form 3-2207 (Award Certification) for processing all awards.


Acting ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - BUDGET,
PLANNING AND HUMAN RESOURCES

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

Remove:

224 FW 3, FWM 382, 11/29/01 (2 sheets)
224 FW 4, FWM 382, 11/29/01 (2 sheets)
224 FW 5, FWM 382, 11/29/01 (1 sheet)
224 FW 6, FWM 382, 11/29/01 (3 sheets)

Insert:

224 FW 3, FWM 384, 12/27/01 (2 sheets)
224 FW 4, FWM 384, 12/27/01 (2 sheets)
224 FW 5, FWM 384, 12/27/01 (1 sheet)
224 FW 6, FWM 384, 12/27/01 (3 sheets)

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
PERSONNEL**

Personnel

Part 224 Performance and Utilization

Chapter 3 Awards and Recognition Program

224 FW 3

3.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter and 224 FW 4 through 224 FW 6 comprise the Awards and Recognition Program for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These chapters provide policy and procedures for initiating, processing, and approving monetary, nonmonetary, and honor awards for employees, partners-in-mission, private citizens, groups, and corporations.

3.2 What are the objectives of the Awards and Recognition Program?

A. The Service is mission-oriented and we are fully committed to the accomplishment of our goals and objectives. To ensure that these objectives are met, we use the Awards and Recognition Program as a motivational tool to encourage employees to take an active part in improving Government operations by making full use of their skills and ideas. When appropriate, we will timely recognize and reward those employees whose individual or group efforts have contributed to the efficiency, economy, or increased effectiveness of Government operations or to the achievement of a significant reduction in paperwork.

B. Recognition and incentives are accomplished through a formal system of awards that provides acknowledgment for tangible and intangible contributions. The system also serves to remind supervisors of the importance of recognizing contributions and providing further incentive, and it achieves a measure of uniformity in the type and degree of recognition given for comparable contributions.

C. While there are many elements that we must consider in motivating employees, recognition is an important and contributing factor to job satisfaction of workers at all levels. Employees are more apt to do their best work if they are convinced that management considers them individually important to the accomplishment of the Service mission and that management sincerely appreciates efforts exceeding those normally expected.

3.3 To whom does this program apply? The provisions of 224 FW 3 through 224 FW 6 apply to Service employees, partners-in-mission, and private citizens.

3.4 What is the Service policy on awards and recognition?

A. It is our policy to:

(1) Appropriately recognize and promptly reward individuals and groups for superior performance, special acts, or other personal efforts that substantially exceed normal expectations and result in improved Government productivity or services.

(2) Ensure that we base awards on merit and that supervisors recommend and grant awards in an equitable and commensurate manner.

(3) Give due recognition to supervisors for the extent to which they successfully motivate employee interest and participation in the Awards and Recognition Program.

(4) Ensure that we grant monetary, nonmonetary, and honorary recognition, when appropriate, based on demonstrated high quality performance.

(5) Recognize employees without regard to any nonmerit factors such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or physical/mental disability.

(6) Recognize the accomplishments of partners-in-mission, private citizens, groups, and corporations for their contributions in furthering the Service mission.

B. It is within the framework of the program to recognize those persons who contribute to Government through superior efforts in extending equal opportunity. Recognition to deserving supervisors, employees, or units is appropriate and desirable when there are significant achievements in advancing equal employment opportunity.

C. Elements rendered negotiable by 5 U.S.C. 7117 may be negotiated at the appropriate authority level. In negotiations, the provisions of this chapter will serve as guidelines.

D. The granting of, failure to grant, or the amount of a monetary award, the receipt of or failure to receive a quality step increase, or the receipt of or failure to receive an honorary award or any other type of discretionary award, including awards of rank of meritorious or distinguished service for members of the Senior Executive Service, are a management prerogative and are not subject to the Service's administrative grievance procedures.

3.5 What are the authorities for this program? This chapter and 224 FW 4 through 224 FW 6 are in accordance with the following authorities:

A. 5 U.S.C. 45 - Incentive Awards

B. 5 CFR 451 - Awards

C. 5 CFR 531 Subpart E - Quality Step Increases

D. Department of the Interior Human Resources Management Handbook- Awards and Recognition Program.

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3.6 Who is responsible for the administering and implementing the program?

A. The Director is responsible for the overall management and administration of the Awards and Recognition Program.

B. The Assistant Director - Budget, Planning, and Human Resources provides overall direction for the administration and implementation of an effective Awards and Recognition Program.

C. Regional Directors are responsible for conducting an efficient Awards and Recognition Program in their respective Region in accordance with procedures set forth in this chapter and 224 FW 4 through 224 FW 6.

D. The Service Incentive Awards Committee comprises four members of the Service Directorate. The Deputy Director serves as the Chairperson. The committee functions as an advisory body for the operation of the Awards and Recognition Program. The committee reviews and recommends for approval nominations for all cash awards exceeding \$4,000 and all honor awards.

E. Supervisors and managers play a key role in the operation of the Awards and Recognition Program, because of their daily contact with employees. Their responsibilities are to:

(1) Acquaint themselves with the purpose and operation of the Awards and Recognition Program.

(2) Conduct and promote the program within their organization.

(3) Periodically discuss the program with their employees to ensure their understanding of the opportunities available under the program.

(4) Ensure that we recognize employees' contributions in a timely manner.

F. The Service Human Resources Officer is responsible for effectively implementing the Awards and Recognition Program.

G. The Division of Human Resources, Washington Office.

(1) The Branch of Management Initiatives provides guidance to Regional Personnel Offices, the Branch of Headquarters Personnel Operations, and the Service Incentive Awards Committee, advising and assisting in identifying program needs, clarifying new and existing policies and directives, and formulating policies to effect a viable Servicewide program. This office also has responsibility for the technical compliance review

coordination of award recommendations that the Director must endorse or approve.

(2) The Branch of Headquarters Personnel Operations provides staff and operational assistance to the Washington Office Directorate and administers the program within the Washington Office.

H. Regional Personnel Officers are responsible for the administrative operation of the program within their respective Region.

I. Servicing Personnel Offices have oversight responsibility for ensuring that recommended or approved monetary awards are appropriate and comply with established regulations before payment is made. They have responsibility for ensuring the conformity, compliance, and completeness of award recommendations and nominations referred to the Washington Office. Give particular attention to ensuring that the immediate or second-level supervisor of the nominated employee has surnamed or signed each award nomination, especially when the nomination was initiated by another office. It is highly recommended that servicing personnel offices develop a checklist for processing awards that reflects Regional procedures to ensure that all components of regulatory compliance have been satisfied for the award recommendation before it is processed for payment or forwarded for final approval. If an award does not meet established criteria or the form is not completed correctly, return it to the approving official for corrective action.

3.7 What are definitions for terms used in the Awards and Recognition Program?

A. Employee. An employee is an officer or individual who is appointed in the Civil Service by a Federal officer, engaged in the performance of a Federal function under authority of law or an Executive Act, and subject to the supervision of a Federal officer while engaged in the performance of the duties of his/her position.

B. Honor Award. An honor award is a prestigious award bestowed on employees and partners-in-mission for significant accomplishments and contributions to the Service and the Department.

C. Incentive Award. A monetary, nonmonetary, or honor award.

D. Monetary Award. A monetary award is a cash award granted to an employee. Monetary award amounts are recommended in *gross* amounts only and are based on the accomplishment, not a percentage of an employee's salary.

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E. Nonmonetary Award. A letter of appreciation or other appropriate means to recognize contributions by employees and partners-in-mission that do not meet the standard for a cash award, or in cases where the contributions do meet the standard, but the supervisor chooses not to grant a monetary award.

F. Partner-In-Mission. A partner-in-mission includes volunteers; individuals employed by non-Federal entities, such as State, local, or tribal governments; or other outside groups.

3.8 Is there an annual approval limit for monetary awards? The annual limit for approval of monetary awards is \$5,000 per employee per performance year. The Director must approve each award over the annual limit. The time frame for the annual limit begins on the first day of the performance year and ends on the last day and includes all monetary awards paid during this period of time, regardless of when the nomination was approved.

3.9 Who can approve award nominations?

A. Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks approves all cash awards from \$5,001 up to and including \$10,000. The Assistant Secretary must concur with all monetary awards in excess of \$10,000, which are then forwarded through the Department for final approval by the Office of Personnel Management. The Assistant Secretary is also the approval official for all Departmental honor awards.

B. The Director:

(1) Approves all monetary awards from \$4,001 up to and including \$5,000.

(2) Must concur on monetary awards greater than \$5,000 before they are forwarded for final approval, as appropriate.

(3) Approves all monetary awards for an employee who has received more than \$5,000 in awards during a performance year (see paragraph 3.8).

(4) Approves all honor awards.

C. Assistant and Regional Directors and persons officially acting in their capacity may approve cash awards up to and including \$4,000. In Regional Offices, the Regional Director may delegate this authority to levels no lower than Assistant Regional Directors. Regional Directors and Assistant Directors must be the nominating official on all awards that require the Director's signature. They may not approve honor awards.

D. Supervisors and Managers may approve monetary awards from \$50 to \$1,000.

3.10 What is the policy regarding award ceremonies?

Regional and Assistant Directors may provide light refreshments for awards ceremony receptions at which co-workers and friends congratulate awards recipients. Payment for such refreshments may be made with appropriated funds. Light refreshments will be served only when a reception would materially enhance the effectiveness of the ceremony. Use of this authority is intended for awards ceremonies at which a number of employees receive honor awards or other incentive awards; e.g., a Regional quarterly awards ceremony. Light refreshments may include coffee, tea, punch, cookies, cakes, doughnuts, chips, and similar snack items. You may **not** use appropriated funds to purchase meals or alcoholic beverages. The cost of light refreshments in connection with an awards ceremony will not exceed a total of \$500 or \$2.00 per person in attendance, whichever is less.

3.11 What are the administrative requirements under the program?

A. An employee's supervisor or manager is responsible for maintaining records regarding each employee's award history. Employing offices must maintain award records in accordance with the General Records Schedule, which requires that award documentation be retained for two years. With the exception of SES Rank awards, we will not print or file an SF 50 in the employee's Official Personnel Folder.

B. FWS Form 3-2207 (Award Certification) is the only form approved for nominating individuals or teams for an award under the Award and Recognition Program. We will not accept any other form. The servicing personnel office will return incomplete or illegible forms to the nominating official for corrective action.

3.12 Can I establish a new recognition program?

Regional Directors and Assistant Directors are not authorized to approve the implementation of any new incentive award program within their area of responsibility, nor are they authorized to provide any type of employee recognition outside of the recognition authorized in this chapter without first forwarding a plan for the recognition to the Division of Human Resources for the Director's approval.